

October 26, 2009

The Honorable Daniel Inouye  
Chairman  
Senate Appropriations Committee  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Thad Cochran  
Ranking Member  
Senate Appropriations Committee  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable David Obey  
Chairman  
House Appropriations Committee  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jerry Lewis  
Ranking Member  
House Appropriations Committee  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senators Inouye and Cochran and Representatives Obey and Lewis:

As you move forward with conference of the Fiscal Year 2010 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education (Labor-HHS) appropriations bill, on behalf of the undersigned local, state, and national organizations committed to the health and well-being of our nation's young people, we urge you to follow-through in eliminating funding for all abstinence-only-until-marriage programs and funding the most comprehensive prevention initiative possible.

We are encouraged that both chambers of Congress agreed with the President in eliminating funding for existing abstinence-only-until-marriage programs and, in their stead, funding more comprehensive approaches to sex education. **We fully support this shift from funding ineffective abstinence-only-until-marriage programs to spending federal funds on an evidence-based and comprehensive approach to sex education.** After more than 25 years and more than \$1.5 billion of wasteful spending on ineffective abstinence-only-until-marriage programs, Congress has the opportunity to meet the needs of all young people by crafting a program that includes information about both abstinence and contraception and addresses the root issues that help teens make responsible decisions and keep them safe and healthy.

The House provides a total program funding level of \$114.455 million while the Senate funds the initiative at only \$104.455 million. **We urge Congress to fund the program at the higher funding level.**

We need to invest in a holistic approach that provides all of our young people with comprehensive, medically accurate, and age-appropriate sex education that helps them reduce their risk of unintended pregnancy, HIV/AIDS, and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs). The House bill focuses exclusively on funding teen pregnancy prevention programs while the Senate bill takes an appropriately broader view and supports funding for "improving the reproductive health and well-being of young people" through efforts aimed at both reducing unintended teen pregnancy as well as STIs, including HIV. **We strongly urge Congress to enact a broad initiative that addresses unintended teen pregnancy, as well as STI, and HIV prevention.**

We are also concerned about the sustainability of the initiative should it remain administered exactly as the competitive abstinence-only-until-marriage grants program has been administered. Furthermore, the initiative must address the often unmet and interrelated health needs of adolescents and be linked to public health outcomes. Therefore, **we urge Congress to follow the Senate language and ensure that the new initiative is invested in multiple agencies of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).** The Senate directs funding to be a collaboration between HHS agencies including ACF, CDC, and OPA and we fully support this inter-departmental approach. The agencies within HHS all have a role to play in ensuring that this new teen initiative is as successful as possible and is able to be implemented effectively by public and private entities, as indicated in both the House and Senate versions of the bill. It is essential that they all work together and collaborate on this public-health driven program.

Congress is well on its way to acting in the best interest of young people by supporting public health and education policies that are comprehensive, rooted in the best science, and reflect mainstream values. We urge you to finalize the strongest possible initiative that will meet the needs of all young people and will be sustainable in the long term.

If you would like any additional information, please do not hesitate to be in touch with William Smith at the Sexuality Information and Education Council of the U.S. (SIECUS) at (202) 265-2405 or Marcela Howell at Advocates for Youth at (202) 419-3420.

Sincerely,

ACT UP Philadelphia (Philadelphia, PA)  
ADAP Advocacy Association (aaa+) (Washington, DC)  
Advocates for Youth  
AIDS Action Baltimore (Baltimore, MD)  
AIDS Action Council  
AIDS Alabama  
AIDS Alliance for Children, Youth & Families  
AIDS Foundation of Chicago (Chicago, IL)  
The AIDS Institute  
AIDS Law Project of Pennsylvania  
AIDS Task Force of the Upper Ohio Valley (Wheeling, WV)  
AIDS Taskforce of Greater Cleveland (Cleveland, OH)  
ALEPH: Alliance for Jewish Renewal  
Alliance For Full Acceptance (Charleston, SC)  
Alliance for Living (New London, CT)  
Allies Linked for the Prevention of HIV & AIDS (a.l.p.h.a.) (Boise, ID)  
American Association of University Women  
American Association on Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities  
American Civil Liberties Union  
ACLU of Kansas and Western Missouri (Kansas City, MO)  
American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists  
American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, District IX (Sacramento, CA)  
American College of Sexologists  
American Humanist Association  
American Journal of Sexuality Education (Easton, PA)

American Psychological Association (Washington, DC)  
American Public Health Association  
American School Health Association  
American Social Health Association  
Answer  
Arizona Women's Alliance  
Asian Communities for Reproductive Justice  
Association of Nurses in AIDS Care (Akron, OH)  
Association of Reproductive Health Professionals (ARHP)  
Black Women's Health Imperative  
Caare Inc. (Durham, NC)  
CAEAR Foundation  
California Association of School Health Educator (CASHE)  
Cascade AIDS Project (Portland, OR)  
Catholics for Choice  
Center for Inquiry  
Center for Reproductive Rights  
Center for Women Policy Studies  
CenterLink: The Community of LGBT Centers  
Chicago Foundation for Women (Chicago, IL)  
Chicago Women's AIDS Project (Chicago, IL)  
Chicago Recovery Alliance (Chicago, IL)  
Christian Association at the University of Pennsylvania (Philadelphia, PA)  
Christiana Care Health Services HIV Program (Wilmington, DE)  
Coalition for Responsible Sex Ed (Minnesota)  
Coastal Bend AIDS Foundation, Inc. (Corpus Christi, TX)  
Colorado Organization for Latina Opportunity & Reproductive Rights (COLOR)  
Community Access National Network  
Community HIV/AIDS Mobilization Project (CHAMP)  
Community HIV/Hepatitis Advocates of Iowa Network (CHAIN)  
Concord Feminist Health Center (Concord, NH)  
Core Center RMR (Chicago, IL)  
Family Equality Council (Boston, MA)  
Family Planning Council (Philadelphia, PA)  
Feminist Majority  
First Reformed Church (Schenectady, NY)  
Florida Healthy Teens Campaign  
Frannie Peabody Center (Portland, ME)  
Gay & Lesbian Medical Association  
Gay Men's Health Crisis (GMHC)  
Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network  
Georgia Parents for Responsible Health Education  
Girls Inc. (Washington, DC)  
Greater Bridgeport Adolescent Pregnancy Program, Inc (Bridgeport, CT)  
Harlem United (New York, NY)  
Harm Reduction Coalition (New York, NY)  
Health & Education Alternatives for Teens, SUNY Downstate Medical Center  
(Brooklyn, NY)  
Health Services Center (Anniston, AL)

Healthy Kids Rhode Island  
Healthy Teens Connecticut Coalition  
Hispanic Office of Planning and Evaluation, Inc. of Massachusetts (HOPE)  
HiTOPS (Princeton, NJ)  
HIV Medicine Association  
HIVictorious, Inc. (Madison, WI)  
Human Rights Campaign  
Illinois Caucus for Adolescent Health  
Institute for Advanced Study of Human Sexuality (San Francisco, CA)  
International Women's Health Coalition  
Latino Community Services, Inc. (Hartford, CT)  
Law Students for Reproductive Justice  
Lifelong AIDS Alliance (Seattle, WA)  
Living Room, Inc. (Atlanta, GA)  
Look Both Ways, Inc. (Loveland, CO)  
Lower New York Consortium (New York, NY)  
MANA Volunteer (Manchester, CT)  
Mary Wohlford Foundation  
Massachusetts Alliance on Teen Pregnancy  
Mautner Project: The National Lesbian Health Organization  
Metropolitan Coalition for Responsible Sex Education (Kansas City, MO)  
Metropolitan Community Churches (Sarasota, FL)  
Minnesota AIDS Project  
Minnesota Organization on Adolescent Pregnancy, Prevention and Parenting  
Missouri AIDS Task Force  
Nashville CARES (Nashville, TN)  
National Alliance of State & Territorial AIDS Directors  
National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO)  
National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health  
National Center for Lesbian Rights  
National Coalition for LGBT Health  
National Coalition of STD Directors (NCSD)  
National Council of Jewish Women  
National Council of Jewish Women, California  
National Council of Jewish Women, Connecticut State Public Affairs  
National Family Planning and Reproductive Health Association (NFPRHA)  
National Gay and Lesbian Task Force Action Fund  
National Latina Health Network  
National Pediatric AIDS Network (Boulder, CO)  
National Sexuality Resource Center  
National Youth Advocacy Coalition  
Needle Exchange Program of Asheville (Asheville, NC)  
New Mexicans for Responsible Sexuality Education (NMRSE) (Albuquerque, NM)  
Northwest Suburban NOW (Arlington Heights, IL)  
Pacific Institute for Women's Health (Oakland, CA)  
Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG) National  
Pediatric AIDS Chicago Prevention Initiative (Chicago, IL)  
Pennsylvania Coalition to Prevent Teen Pregnancy  
Pennsylvania NOW, Inc.

People For the American Way (Washington, DC)  
Physicians for Reproductive Choice and Health  
Project Inform  
PWA Coalition of Dallas, Inc./AIDS Services of Dallas (Dallas, TX)  
Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice of Connecticut, Inc.  
Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice of New Mexico  
Religious Institute  
Reproductive Health Technologies Project  
Republican Majority for Choice  
Response (Skokie, IL and Prairie View, IL)  
Rhode Island NOW  
San Francisco AIDS Foundation (San Francisco, CA)  
San Gabriel Valley/Whittier NOW Chapter of NOW (Southern CA)  
Secular Coalition for America  
Sexuality Information and Education Council of the U.S. (SIECUS)  
Sierra Club  
New Jersey Chapter Sierra Club  
Society for Public Health Education  
The Society for the Scientific Study of Sexuality  
South Carolina HIV/AIDS Council  
Southern AIDS Coalition (Birmingham, AL)  
Southern Nevada Young Women's Collaborative (Boulder City, NV)  
Southwest Center for HIV/AIDS (Phoenix, AZ)  
Southwestern PA AIDS Planning Coalition (Pittsburgh, PA)  
St. Philip House, Inc. (Plainville, CT)  
Teen Talk Sexuality Education (Redwood City, CA)  
Texas Freedom Network  
Total Health Awareness Team (Rockford, IL)  
Transgender Law Center  
Treatment Action Group (TAG)  
Trinity College Women & Gender Resource Action Center (WGRAC) (Hartford, CT)  
Twin States Network (Guilford, VT)  
Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations  
United Church of Christ Justice and Witness Ministries  
Unity Wellness Center (Auburn, AL)  
Vermont Committee for AIDS, Resources, and Education  
West Alabama AIDS Outreach (Tuscaloosa, AL)  
Women of Reform Judaism  
WOMEN'S WAY (Philadelphia, PA)  
Woodhull Freedom Foundation  
YWCA of the Hartford Region (Hartford, CT)

Cc:  
House Appropriations Committee  
Senate Appropriations Committee  
Majority Leader Harry Reid  
Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi